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ABSTRACT

This teaching aid outlines basic anthropological concepts described in the various units of the Anthropology Curriculum Project. The outline of important concepts to be learned is intended to be used by the teacher in conjunction with the other instructional materials in each unit. The introduction defines anthropology, its branches and purposes. Other topics covered are evolution, fossil man, race, culture, old world prehistory, new world prehistory, technology, economics, kinship, political and non-kin groups, religion, and life cycle. The outline is arranged in 13 short sections, each dealing with a topic covered by one or more of the related units. Each topic, defined and discussed in short sentences, includes from three to 13 subtopics. (CK)

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OUTLINE OF BASIC CONCEPTS

IN

ANTHROPOLOGY

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Publication No. 1

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INTRODUCTION

1. Anthropology is the study of man as the cultured animal throughout time and space. As a discipline it belongs to the natural sciences and social sciences.

2. Anthropology is comprised of two main branches, physical anthropology and cultural anthropology. Culture is the link between both branches. For study, anthropology can be subdivided into several areas of specialization.

3. Physical anthropology is a subdivision of primatology. Physical anthropology includes how man's bodily function, physiology, and activity interact with his environment, which includes his culture.

4. Cultural anthropology includes the study of the following:

   a. Archeology is the study of past cultures. It is a historical method of studying ethnology.

   b. Ethnology is the study of all cultures.

   c. Linguistics is the study of language.

5. The central theme of anthropology is the search for a set of principles which describes and explains man's physical and cultural condition.

6. "Anthropology" is derived from anthropo meaning man and logos meaning study of. Thus anthropology is the study of man.

7. Anthropology tries to view a pattern of culture as a composite of interdependent, interacting, interrelated, and mutually adjusted parts.

8. The purpose of anthropology is to make people understand better what they are by:

   a. Examining what they are not.

   b. Examining what they used to be.

   c. Examining what they are.

EVOLUTION

1. Evolution is descent with modification or change through time.

2. Evidence of evolution can be examined from two points of view:

   a. Indirect evidence consists of data in the fields of ecology, comparative anatomy, embryology, and race formation.

   b. Direct evidence involves the examination of fossils.

3. Man, apes, and monkeys all evolved from the same unspecialized mammal.

4. Forces of evolution are:

   a. Selection (natural and social)

   b. Genetic drift

   c. Mutation

   d. Mixture

FOSSIL MAN

1. Ancestors of man are to be sought in the order of primates. Man did not descend from the monkey. Both man and apes probably descended from a common primitive primate who has long since become extinct.

2. The time and location of the separation of the Hominid branch has not been definitely classified.

3. Of the fossils which have been found, some are believed to be from the line which ultimately produced modern man.

RACE

1. Race may be studied as:

   a. An extension of biology.

   b. A cultural and social phenomenon.

2. Biological and cultural definitions of races have little in common.

3. It is not a question of whether the differences exist or not, but what are the relevances of the differences.

CULTURE

1. Culture is that part of learned human behavior that is the instrument whereby people adjust to their total setting.

2. Culture derives from the biological, environmental, psychic, and historical components of human experience.

3. Wherever man is, culture is organized around a core of learned imperatives (universals, specialties, alternatives).

4. Man in groups is faced with two problems:

   a. Survival in the physical world.

   b. Getting along with other human beings.

5. The predictable aspects of culture that make ways of living seem natural are learned.

6. Individual culture traits vary from group to group, but culture exhibits regularities that permit its analysis.

7. Culture is a form of evolutionary adaptation.

8. Culture is universal but comes in many varieties.

9. Cultures, though relatively stable, change through time.

10. Culture may be divided into components for study.

    a. What is culture? (definition, components)

    b. How is it learned? (enculturation)

    c. How does it change? (forces of change and stability)

11. Strictly speaking, culture is non-material, but learned human behavior (culture) can be studied by examination of material cultural items (artifacts).

OLD WORLD PREHISTORY

1. The sequential pattern of human culture, in Old World Prehistory, can best be understood in terms of the means of subsistence and types of implements.

2. The five successive periods of human culture based on means of subsistence and types of implements are:

    a. Paleolithic Era

    b. Mesolithic Era

    c. Neolithic Revolution

    d. Urban Revolution

    e. Industrial Revolution

3. The sequences of Paleolithic cultures are best known for the European area. However, European prehistory is only generally characteristic of Paleolithic prehistory elsewhere.

4. The most significant aspect of the Neolithic was the shift from food gathering to food production.

5. The major characteristics of the Neolithic first developed in the Eastern Mediterranean area and diffused throughout most of the adjacent land masses.

6. Prehistory of the Eastern Mediterranean area best reveals the manner in which man made his way into the Neolithic and the sequences of the Neolithic and Urban Revolutions.

NEW WORLD PREHISTORY

1. Man is thought to have evolved in the Eastern Hemisphere and entered the Western Hemisphere as a Homo sapien bringing some basic culture with him.

2. The time of entry was relatively late. Man was, however, here at least by 10,000 B.C.

3. The route of entry favored by most anthropologists is from northeastern Asia via the Bering Straits to Alaska and then spreading to the rest of the American continents.

4. Bands of immigrants might have entered in an indefinite series of successive waves.

5. Most of the later cultural developments and achievements seem to have been independently evolved in the Americas.

6. New World cultural history may be viewed in terms of the following sequence:

   a. Paleo-Indian

   b. Archaic

   c. Classic

   d. Formative

   e. Post-classic

   f. Post-conquest

TECHNOLOGY

1. Tools and containers can be classified in various ways:

   a. Cutting tools are classified by their function, the material from which they are made, or by the techniques used in their manufacture.

   b. Metal working includes mining, smelting, alloying, forging, or casting.

c. Containers may be grouped as to simple or processed.

2. Shelters and dwellings of some sort are today universal among men although their earliest examples, or the actual circumstances of origin, are unknown.

3. Clothing may be worn for protection against weather, for adornment, or for modesty, and cannot be explained in terms of any one of these needs alone.

4. Horticulture is cultivation with a digging stick or spade. Agriculture refers to cultivation with a plow and draft animals.

5. The production of food is probably the most important step in the development of civilization. With the adoption of agriculture, a given population could grow and become more sedentary.

6. Transportation of some sort is essential to all human societies. Improvement in transportation was associated with many changes in cultures, for it stimulated trade and allowed interaction among diverse peoples.

7. The wheel, a method of harnessing rotary motion, was one of the most significant of inventions.

8. The reckoning of time is universal and has great antiquity.

9. The arch developed in Mesopotamia and spread through the Mediterranean to India. As a principle of construction it remained in the Old World until comparatively recent times.

10. The use of pottery is not universal. In many areas the use of pottery was a convenience rather than a necessity.

11. Weaving involves the use of spun yarn, a loom, and a process of interlacing yarns without twining.

12. Writing is a system of symbols that substitute for spoken language.

13. Technology is the sum total of the techniques possessed by the members of a society.

ECONOMICS

1. All societies utilize the basic factors of production: land, labor, know-how, and tools.

2. Goods are distributed according to four methods:

   a. Householding--the household produces and consumes.

   b. Reciprocity--goods are given and gotten according to status or kinship.

   c. Redistribution--payment into a center and paying out.

   d. Market contract--exchange of goods at a value determined by supply and demand. (Characteristic of modern Western European cultures).

3. Labor is doing what is required by one's society so as to get one's share of the items of production. Some form of division of labor is found in all societies.

4. All societies are distributed in space in some form of social organization in such a way as to utilize the land for food and production.

5. Factors of production must be utilized everywhere but can be institutionalized in many ways.

6. All people are involved in economic activity that goes beyond bare needs.

KINSHIP

1. Kinship systems are the basis of most social systems.

2. Kinship is a system of family relationships, but its principle extends to relationships outside the family.

3. Most Americans have difficulty in explaining kinship because it is not the central organizing principle in our society.

4. Kinship is a cultural phenomenon rather than a biological one. Each culture defines the various statuses of kinship and the roles of these statuses according to its unique set of views and values.

POLITICAL AND NON-KIN GROUPS

1. Psychological factors produce divisions of large populations into units because of the need of companionship, reassurance, emotional security, and the impossibility of establishing close contact or developing habitual attitudes toward any great number of people.

2. Status and role serve to reduce the ideal patterns for social life to individual terms.

3. The two types of statuses are ascribed and achieved. Status may be assigned to a person from birth on the basis of sex, age, family relationship, and birth into a particular socially established group. Achieved status is earned through competition and individual effort.

4. Role is the activity associated with a particular status.

5. Power systems exist in all societies and may lead to systems of ranking.

6. Systems of legal inequality exist in some rank systems.

7. Political organization deals with power in a territory based on a legal system and international relations.

8. Political structure deals with power, territory, legal system, warfare, and diplomacy.

9. Patterns of warfare are linked with development of political systems.

10. Political systems order relations between groups by diplomacy or war.

RELIGION

1. Religion includes all those patterns of behaving whereby men strive with the aid of supernatural agencies to reduce the uncertainties of daily living and to compensate for the crises which result from the unexpected and unpredictable.

2. Religious patterns of behaving are inextricably combined with both technology and social organization and find much of their meaning in this combination.

3. Religion involves, among other things, belief in supernatural force whose actions relative to man may be influenced and even controlled.

4. Religion and morality are separable, but religion also serves to reinforce morality.

5. Belief in the supernatural may be viewed as a function or a phenomenon.

6. Religious systems exist everywhere.

7. Anthropology studies religions, but does not teach religions.

8. Magic is a body of techniques and methods for controlling the universe on the assumption that if certain procedures are followed minutely, certain results are inevitable.

9. Magic is connected with religion in that it is only one of the ways in which men seek to control supernatural powers. Magic is sometimes confused with spurious science.

LIFE CYCLE

1. Life cycle is a basic biological phenomenon and cultural responses to these fixed biological events are varied.

2. Stages in the life cycle are:

   a. Conception

   b. Pregnancy

   c. Child birth

   d. Childhood

   e. Puberty

   f. Adulthood and Old Age

   g. Death